



## ***United States Attorney District of New Jersey***

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### **NEW JERSEY MAN SENTENCED TO 26 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR IMMIGRATION FRAUD**

NEWARK, N.J. – Syed Zaidi, 54, of Plainsboro, N.J., was sentenced today to 26 months in prison for his role in an immigration fraud conspiracy, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Zaidi previously pleaded guilty to Count One and Count 11 of an Indictment charging him with conspiracy to submit fraudulent documents to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and inducing an illegal alien to remain in the United States. Zaidi entered his guilty plea before United States District Judge William J. Martini, who also imposed the sentence today in Newark federal court.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

From July 2002 through June 2009, Zaidi and his co-conspirators helped dozens of aliens file fraudulent applications with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. The fraudulent applications typically asserted that the alien applicants qualified for employment authorization or lawful permanent resident status because they were religious workers or had specialized skills as computer consultants or in graphic design. Other applications fraudulently asserted that the aliens qualified for lawful permanent resident status under a federally-recognized Amnesty Program, claiming they had continuously resided in the United States illegally since before January 1, 1982.

The applications contained letters from alleged employers, bank statements, and tax records which were fabricated by Zaidi and his co-conspirators to make the applications appear credible. Zaidi and his co-conspirators charged each alien applicant anywhere from \$5,000 to \$30,000 to complete and file their respective applications.

In addition to the prison term, Judge Martini sentenced Zaidi to three years of supervised release. Judge Martini noted that in sentencing the defendant, he took into account that while out on bail, Zaidi contacted and attempted to influence the testimony of at least two government witnesses.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Peter Edge in Newark, N.J., with the investigation. He also thanked the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, under the direction of District

Director John E. Thompson.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ronnell L. Wilson of the U.S. Attorney's Office Criminal Division in Newark.

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Defense counsel: John Yauch, Esq., Assistant Federal Public Defender, Newark